

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method of detecting a *Plasmodium* malarial agent of humans in a biological sample comprising contacting a probe or primer of the *Plasmodium berghei* extrachromosomal genetic element with said sample or a nucleic acid derived therefrom for a time and under conditions sufficient for hybridisation to occur and then detecting said hybridisation using a detection means, wherein the probe or primer is nucleotides 1147 to 1740 of SEQ ID NO:1 or 15 or more consecutive nucleotides or a complementary nucleotide sequence thereto.
- 2-4. (canceled)
5. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the hybridisation step is performed under low stringency hybridisation conditions.
6. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the hybridisation step is performed under moderate stringency hybridisation conditions.
7. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the hybridisation step is performed under high stringency hybridisation conditions.

8. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the detection means used to detect the hybridisation comprises identifying a signal produced by a reporter molecule bound to the probe or primer, wherein the reporter molecule produces an identifiable signal.
9. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 8 wherein the reporter molecule is a radioisotope or a non-isotopic reporter molecule.
10. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the detection means comprises a polymerase chain reaction (PCR) format.
11. (Original) The method according to claim 10 wherein the PCR format comprises RT-PCR.
12. (Canceled)
13. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the *Plasmodium* malarial agent of humans is selected from the group consisting of *Plasmodium falciparum*, *Plasmodium vivax*, *Plasmodium ovale* and *Plasmodium malariae*.
14. (Previously amended) The method according to claim 1 wherein the biological sample comprises blood or a derivative thereof.
15. (Original) The method according to claim 14 wherein the biological sample comprises dried blood.

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16-45. (Canceled)

46. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 9 wherein the non-isotopic reporter molecule is biotin.